

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEVADA**

RONALD J. ALLISON,

Case No.: 2:21-cv-01784-APG-NJK

Plaintiff

Order

V.

STAFF & STEIN FORENSICS UNIT,

Defendant

9 Plaintiff Ronald J. Allison brings this civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 to
10 redress constitutional violations that he claims he suffered while incarcerated at the Clark County
11 Detention Center and Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services. ECF No. 1-1. On October
12 1, 2021, the magistrate judge ordered Allison to file a fully complete application to proceed *in*
13 *forma pauperis* or pay the full \$402 filing fee on or before November 30, 2021. ECF No. 3. The
14 magistrate judge warned Allison that the action could be dismissed if he failed to file a fully
15 complete application to proceed *in forma pauperis* with all three documents or pay the full \$402
16 filing fee for a civil action by that deadline. *Id.* at 3. That deadline expired and Allison did not
17 comply with the order or otherwise respond.

18 District courts have the inherent power to control their dockets and “[i]n the exercise of
19 that power, they may impose sanctions including, where appropriate . . . dismissal” of a case.
20 *Thompson v. Hous. Auth. of City of Los Angeles*, 782 F.2d 829, 831 (9th Cir. 1986). A court may
21 dismiss an action based on a party’s failure to obey a court order or comply with local rules. *See*
22 *Carey v. King*, 856 F.2d 1439, 1440-41 (9th Cir. 1988) (affirming dismissal for failure to comply
23 with local rule requiring *pro se* plaintiffs to keep court apprised of address); *Malone v. U.S.*

1 *Postal Service*, 833 F.2d 128, 130 (9th Cir. 1987) (dismissal for failure to comply with court
2 order). In determining whether to dismiss an action on one of these grounds, I must consider:
3 (1) the public's interest in expeditious resolution of litigation; (2) the court's need to manage its
4 docket; (3) the risk of prejudice to the defendants; (4) the public policy favoring disposition of
5 cases on their merits; and (5) the availability of less drastic alternatives. *See In re
6 Phenylpropanolamine Prod. Liab. Litig.*, 460 F.3d 1217, 1226 (9th Cir. 2006) (quoting *Malone
7 v. U.S. Postal Serv.*, 833 F.2d 128, 130 (9th Cir. 1987)).

8 The first two factors (the public's interest in expeditiously resolving this litigation and
9 my interest in managing the docket) weigh in favor of dismissal of Allison's claims. The third
10 factor (risk of prejudice to defendants) also weighs in favor of dismissal because a presumption
11 of injury arises from the occurrence of unreasonable delay in filing a pleading ordered by the
12 court or prosecuting an action. *See Anderson v. Air West*, 542 F.2d 522, 524 (9th Cir. 1976). The
13 fourth factor (the public policy favoring disposition of cases on their merits) is greatly
14 outweighed by the factors favoring dismissal.

15 The fifth factor requires me to consider whether less drastic alternatives can be used to
16 correct the party's failure that brought about the court's need to consider dismissal. *See Yourish
17 v. Cal. Amplifier*, 191 F.3d 983, 992 (9th Cir. 1999) (explaining that considering less drastic
18 alternatives *before* the party has disobeyed a court order does not satisfy this factor); *accord*
19 *Pagtalunan v. Galaza*, 291 F.3d 639, 643 & n.4 (9th Cir. 2002) (explaining that “the persuasive
20 force of” earlier Ninth Circuit cases that “implicitly accepted pursuit of last drastic alternatives
21 prior to disobedience of the court’s order as satisfying this element[,]” *i.e.*, like the “initial
22 granting of leave to amend coupled with the warning of dismissal for failure to comply[,]” have
23 been “eroded” by *Yourish*). Courts “need not exhaust every sanction short of dismissal before

1 finally dismissing a case, but must explore possible and meaningful alternatives.” *Henderson v.*
2 *Duncan*, 779 F.2d 1421, 1424 (9th Cir. 1986). Because this action cannot realistically proceed
3 until and unless Allison either files a fully complete application to proceed *in forma pauperis* or
4 pays the \$402 filing fee for a civil action, the only alternative is to enter a second order setting
5 another deadline. But the reality of repeating an ignored order is that it often only delays the
6 inevitable and squanders the court’s finite resources. The circumstances here do not indicate that
7 this case will be an exception: there is no hint that Allison needs additional time or evidence that
8 he did not receive the court’s order. Setting another deadline is not a meaningful alternative
9 given these circumstances. So the fifth factor favors dismissal.

10 Having thoroughly considered these dismissal factors, I find that they weigh in favor of
11 dismissal. I therefore order that this action is dismissed without prejudice based on Allison’s
12 failure to file a fully complete application to proceed *in forma pauperis* or pay the full \$402
13 filing fee in compliance with the magistrate judge’s October 1, 2021, order. The Clerk of Court
14 is directed to enter judgment accordingly and close this case. No other documents may be filed
15 in this now-closed case. If Allison wishes to pursue his claims, he must file a complaint in a new
16 case.

17 Dated: December 8, 2021

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19 ANDREW P. GORDON
20 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

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